

## **Third District Police Honored at Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce 2010 Public Safety Awards**

We are proud of the brave and dedicated police officers who serve and protect the East County communities of *Burtonsville, Calverton, Cloverly, Colesville, Hillandale and White Oak*. Please read about those officers who this year distinguished themselves while serving us all.

### **Briggs Shopping Center Shooting**

**Police Officer III Robert Mazzuca receives Honorable Mention of Valor**  
**Police Officer III Ian Clark receives Silver Medal of Valor**

On July 26 in the early afternoon at the Briggs Chaney Shopping Center, an innocent bystander was shot when a verbal dispute between two men escalated and they began shooting at each other in the shopping center. The victim was transported to an area hospital for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries. One of the men was taken to the hospital by a relative and subsequently charged. The identity of the second assailant was unknown...more.

Working with the Silver Spring Investigative Section and Repeater Offender Section detectives, the second shooter was identified.

On July 31, the 3rd District Special Assignment Team followed a lead and set up surveillance on Cherry Hill Road in Beltsville, Maryland. They saw the suspect leaving an apartment and knowing his violent nature, decided to take him into custody. Several members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> District Special Assignment Team surrounded him just outside the building. The suspect retreated back into the building and attempted to break into an apartment. Police learned later that the apartment was occupied by a mother and her three children who had no relation to the suspect.

Officers Robert Mazzuca, Ian Clark and Casey Diaz were closest to the suspect and ran into the building. Police Officer III Mazzuca ordered him at gunpoint to get on the ground. He refused and continued his attempt to break into the apartment. Police Officer III Ian Clark deployed his taser and the suspect fell to the ground and reached into his waistband. Believing that the suspect was reaching for a gun, Officer Clark immediately engaged physically with the suspect and was able to wrestle away a fully loaded 38 caliber semi-automatic handgun that was ready to fire. The suspect continued to fight despite eight officers trying to restrain him.

When in custody and interviewed, the suspect revealed that he was a black belt in martial arts. A known user of PCP, he displayed signs that he was under the influence of the drug, which explained his apparent strength, sustained physical resistance, unresponsiveness to the taser. He had multiple prior charges including attempted 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder, 1st and 4th Degree Burglary, Armed Robbery and numerous drug charges. Due to the heroic efforts of the responders, the suspect was charged in

this case with Attempted 1st Degree and 2nd Degree Murder, Attempted Manslaughter, Reckless Endangerment, 1st Degree Assault, Use of a Handgun in the Commission of a Felony/Crime of Violence, Carrying a Concealed Handgun on Person and Carrying a Dangerous Weapon with the Intent to Injure/Cause Serious Bodily Harm.

For leading the charge into the building that lead to the capture of a dangerous suspect and preventing him from entering an apartment containing an innocent family, Police Officer III Robert Mazzuca received the Honorable Mention of Valor.

For taking great personal risk and bravely wrestling with a dangerous and physically determined suspect and preventing him from using his gun with potentially lethal consequences, Police Officer III Ian Clark received the Silver Medal of Valor.

### **Briggs Chaney/Castle Boulevard Attempted Homicide of Police Officer**

#### **Police Officer III Kevin Reese receives the Silver medal of valor**

During the evening of February 26th, Police Officer III Kevin B. Reese and members of the Police Community Action Team were patrolling the Briggs Chaney Road/ Castle Boulevard area. The unit had been requested to patrol the area due to an increase in local street robberies...more

At approximately 8:15, Officer Reese conducted a routine traffic stop of a 1994 Pontiac Bonneville for traffic violations at the 13900 block of Castle Boulevard. Upon approaching the vehicle, Officer Reese looked inside and saw three individuals and detected a strong odor of marijuana. Two additional officers quickly joined Officer Reese. Following established procedures, the driver and a rear seat passenger complied with the police request and stepped from the vehicle and sat on the curb. Officer Reese requested that the front-seat passenger exit the vehicle. Suddenly, the passenger attempted to drive away. Officer Reese reacted quickly and ran around the front of the vehicle to thwart this attempt to escape. The suspect put the vehicle into drive and accelerated rapidly, striking Officer Reese and throwing him onto the hood of the vehicle. This routine traffic stop quickly escalated into a life-threatening situation.

With Officer Reese clinging on the hood, the suspect sped several hundred yards up Castle Boulevard. Officer Reese drew his handgun, and discharged it several times in an attempt to get the driver to stop. The driver swerved to the left, struck a curb, then a fence, throwing Officer Reese into to air. He landed on the paved roadway and sustained serious injuries to both legs. The driver fled the scene. He later turned himself in at a local hospital where he was treated for gunshot wounds. The suspect was subsequently charged with numerous offenses, including attempted first-degree murder and the first degree assault on a police officer.

Through his quick action and clarity of thought in a life-threatening situation involving great personal risk, Police Officer III Kevin B. Reese received the Silver medal of valor.

## **Police save girl from suicide**

**Police Officer III Robert Ulisney receives Silver Medal of Valor**

**Sergeant Robin Lewis receives Bronze Medal of Valor**

**Police Officer III Stanley Barsch receives Honorable Mention of Valor**

On February 27th at 12:30 in the afternoon, 3rd District patrol units were dispatched for a "Suicide in Progress" call at a Silver Spring apartment building. The dispatcher reported that there was a teenage girl on the edge of the roof of a 20-story building threatening suicide...more

Officers Stanley Barsch, Naeem Hargrove, Patrick Hennesy, Curtis Lefisca and Susanna Stanley of the Ida Sector beat team were the first officers to arrive. They observed a teenage girl sitting on edge of the towering building with her legs dangling over the ledge. The officers met with the building's engineer, management and the girl's father and learned that she had reached the rooftop via a ladder on the top landing of the fire stairwell. It led to a 4 x 4-foot hatch left open by a contractor doing maintenance work on the roof. This was the sole means of access to the roof.

Officer Hargrove climbed the ladder to observe the girl, who was perched approximately twelve feet away. Officer Hargrove's attempt to engage her failed so he proceeded down the ladder. Officer Barsch then attempted to speak with the girl but she was resolute. Officers requested crisis negotiators and an Emergency Response Team call-out was made. Other officers gathered more information from the father. They learned she was a depressed 17-year-old, undergoing chemotherapy for an autoimmune disorder and was challenged by family, academic and social pressures.

The girl asked for water and, later, blankets because it was cold on the roof. Officer Barsch delivered bottled water and blankets and sustained contact with the girl until the Crisis Negotiator Team and Emergency Response Team could arrive.

The first trained negotiator to arrive on the scene was Lieutenant Paul Liquorie. Officer David Magnelli was the second trained negotiator served as an additional coach, formulating ideas and negotiation tactics. Lt. Liquorie developed an overall strategy and coached Officer Barsch on what to say. Officer Barsch continued to stabilize the situation.

A female negotiator, Detective Deanna Mackie, replaced Officer Barsch. The Detective had a colleague who succumbed to cancer and she shared this emotional experience with girl. Sergeant Robin Lewis spoke candidly to the girl about her battle with cancer and its emotional strain, but this was still not enough to prompt her to move to safety. Due to darkness, portable lights were delivered to the rooftop as the negotiation continued into the eighth hour.

Sergeant Jeff Nyce of the Tactical Section and Lieutenant Liquorie then decided to deploy a tactical officer as a negotiator who could physically subdue the girl. As

negotiations reached the 10th hour, Officer Robert Ulisney was selected as the tactical officer. A champion wrestler, a defensive tactics instructor, former Navy Seal with teen-aged daughters, he was the ideal choice.

The plan had risks: The lip of the roof's precipice was no higher than 18 inches. If Officer Ulisney moved toward her, he could not use it for leverage or pin her against it. Both of them could fall off the roof. Further complicating the plan was that the roof was comprised of loose gravel that was wet and there were high winds. In addition, the girl had covered herself with blankets.

Sergeant Lewis remained the primary negotiator. She introduced Officer Ulisney who was situated on the roof and was able to keep a rudimentary safety line strapped to him and concealed from the girl. The girl appeared to be getting tired and would from time to time briefly lie down. The Officer sat on the roof near the hatch waiting for the right opportunity. Sergeant Lewis and Officer Ulisney continued to speak and give emotional support to the girl. Officer Ulisney continued to watch her. When she lay down again in the 11th hour, Officer Ulisney lunged from a seated position on the roof, closed the twelve-foot gap between the girl and him and blanketed her with his body. The action team quickly realized what had happened and squeezed through the narrow hatch past Sergeant Lewis in order to help Officer Ulisney who struggled with the girl. Officers Stephens and Clark and Sergeant Dillman gained control of the girl and moved her away from the building's edge. Sergeant Dillman carried her to the hatch to other members of the tactical team and medics. The girl was medically evaluated first by the police tactical medics and then by Fire and Rescue personnel who transported her for an Emergency Evaluation Petition. The extraordinary display of teamwork, patience, and respective expertise, physical and emotional courage was evident throughout the 11-hour ordeal.

For his expert ability to bring stability in the early hours of dangerous life-threatening situation, Police Officer III Stanley Barsch received the Honorable Mention of Valor.

For her extremely brave, effective and personal determination to save a young girl from suicide, Sergeant Robin Lewis received the Bronze Medal of Valor.

For the perfect display of mental and physical agility, to risk and overcome personal danger in a life-threatening situation, Police Officer III Robert Ulisney received the Silver Medal of Valor.